



# MARCY KAPTUR

REPRESENTING OHIO'S 9TH DISTRICT



## **Specialty Crop Resources Fact Sheet**

Specialty crops are typically defined as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture. These crops play a vital role in healthy nutrition but also are an important component of our agricultural economy. Specialty crops represent nearly half of all U.S. farm crops sold. The sales of specialty crops total nearly \$65 billion per year.

This fact sheet summarizes some of the federal programs Congress established at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support specialty crops. Federal specialty crop programs tend to focus on promoting marketing opportunities and undertaking research and extension activities. As a result, this fact sheet separates the federal specialty crop programs into Marketing Programs and Research Programs.

Should you have any questions or would like to request my support if you apply for funding through any of these programs, please do not hesitate to contact my District office at (419) 259-7500 or my Washington, DC office at (202) 225-4146.

## **Specialty Crop Marketing Programs**

### Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP)

Administered by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), SCBGP provides grants to the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) to support projects that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Projects typically funded through this program include school and community gardens; farm-to-school programs; certification and training for farmers; facilities that support the processing, aggregation, and distribution of local specialty crops; and improved access to specialty crops.

Previously funded projects can be found by visiting the "For more information" website below and clicking the "Grant Awards" link on the right hand side of the website.

For more information: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp>

To learn how to apply: <http://www.agri.ohio.gov/divs/SpecialtyCrops/SpecialtyCrops.aspx>

### Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG)

Administered by USDA's Rural Development division, VAPG provides matching grant funding for agricultural producers who add value to their raw products through processing and/or marketing. Examples of VAPG funded projects include the development of feasibility studies, business plans, marketing strategies, working capital to implement a strategy, and farm-based renewable energy.

For more information: [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP\\_VAPG.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_VAPG.html)

To learn how to apply: Contact your local office at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/oh/>

### Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)

Administered by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), FMPP awards grants to eligible entities to establish, improve, and promote farmers' markets, roadside stands, community supported agriculture

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(CSAs) establishments and other direct marketing activities. Examples of FMPP funded projects include electronic benefit transfer (EBT) technology acquisition, promotion campaigns, business planning, and purchasing infrastructure for value-added projects.

Previously funded projects can be found by visiting the below website and clicking on the “Guidelines, Grants and Final Reports” link on the upper right hand side of the website.

For more information including how to apply: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fmpp>

#### Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program (CFPCGP)

Administered by USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), CFPCGP awards grants to support projects that help meet the food needs of low-income people, increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own needs, and promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm and nutrition issues. Projects typically funded through this program include food hubs, farmers markets, community food assessments, and training and capacity building.

Previously funded projects: [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/food/sri/hunger\\_sri\\_awards.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/food/sri/hunger_sri_awards.html)

For more information: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/communityfoodprojects.cfm>

To learn how to apply: [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/community\\_food.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/community_food.html)

#### Farm to School Grant Program

Administered by USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Farm to School grants are awarded to assist eligible entities in implementing farm to school programs that improve access to local foods in eligible schools. Funding is awarded to projects for training; supporting operations; planning, purchasing equipment, developing school gardens, developing partnerships; and implementing programs.

For more information including how to apply: [http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/f2s/f2\\_grant\\_program.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/f2s/f2_grant_program.htm)

#### Community & Economic Development (CED) Program

Administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) Administration for Children & Families’ (ACF) Office of Community Services, CED awards grants to support employment and commercial development projects designed to provide economic self-sufficiency for low-income residents and their communities. CED funds are specifically set-aside for agricultural initiatives.

Previously funded projects: [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/ced/HFFI\\_grantee\\_summaries.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/ced/HFFI_grantee_summaries.html)

For more information including how to apply: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/ced/index.html>

### **Specialty Crop Research Programs**

#### Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI)

Administered by USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), SCRI awards grants for research and extension projects that address specialty crop production issues including researching plant genetics to improving crop characteristics; identifying and addressing threats from pests and diseases; improving overall production and profitability; developing new production innovations and technologies; and developing methods to respond to food safety hazards.

Previously funded projects can be found by visiting the “For more information” link below and clicking on the “Abstracts of Funded Projects” link found about halfway down the website.

For more information: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/specialtycropresearchinitiative.cfm>

To learn how to apply: [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/specialty\\_crop.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/specialty_crop.html)

#### Organic Agriculture Research & Extension Initiative (OREI)

Administered by USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), OREI awards grants for research and extension projects that seek to solve critical organic agricultural issues. The purpose of the program is to fund projects that will enhance the ability of producers and processors who have already adopted organic standards to grow and market high quality organic agricultural projects.

Previously funded projects can be found by visiting the “More information” website below and clicking on the “Abstracts of Funded Projects” link found about halfway down the website.

More information: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/organicagricultureresearchandextensioninitiative.cfm/>

To learn how to apply: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/OREI.html>

#### Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP)

Administered by USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), FSMIP awards matching grants to State Departments of Agriculture to assist in exploring new market opportunities for U.S. food and agricultural projects, and to encourage research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the marketing system.

Previously funded projects can be found by visiting the below “For more information” website below and clicking the “FSMIP Projects: 1999-Present” link found about halfway down the website.

For more information: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fsmp>

To learn how to apply: <http://www.agri.ohio.gov/>

#### Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)

Administered by USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), SBIR awards grants to small businesses to support high quality, advanced concepts research related to important scientific problems and opportunities in agricultural that could lead to significant public benefit if successful.

Previously funded projects: [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/sbir/sbir\\_abstracts.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/sbir/sbir_abstracts.html)

For more information: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/smallbusinessinnovationresearch.cfm>

To learn how to apply: [http://nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/sbir\\_rfa.html](http://nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/sbir_rfa.html)

### **Additional USDA Informational Resources**

USDA’s Office of Advocacy and Outreach (OAO): <http://www.outreach.usda.gov>  
USDA’s Know Your Farmer Know Your Food Initiative: <http://www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer>  
USDA’s Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC): <http://afsic.nal.usda.gov/>  
National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service (ATTRA): <https://attra.ncat.org/>  
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE): <http://www.northcentralsare.org/>

***Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur’s Online Congressional Office: <http://kaptur.house.gov>***